

To: Professor Persily  
From: Jacob Shelly  
Re: Voter Registration  
Date: June 14, 2013

---

## **I. Introduction**

Of the four to six million votes estimated to have been lost in the 2000 presidential election, between 1.5 million and 3 million votes were lost because of problems with the registration process.<sup>1</sup> In the 2008 presidential election, 13% of registered voters who did not participate attributed registration problems as a major factor in their nonparticipation.<sup>2</sup> According to the Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project, problems with the registration process include<sup>3</sup>:

- Eligible citizens have trouble finding the right form, or are unable to fill out the registration form completely or on time.
- When voters change residences or names, they may fail to update their existing voter registration information, or fail to do so by the state deadline.
- The completed registration form could be lost in the mail, or otherwise misplaced or delivered after the deadline.
- Information that a voter provides may be difficult to read, or incorrectly entered into the voting registry.

This memo reviews how these and other registration problems are caused, exacerbated, or ameliorated by state and federal voter registration laws. I review recent studies analyzing the effect of registration laws on the rates of registration and election day turnout, paying particular attention to variances among different demographic groups. I then examine the relationship between voter registration systems and other signs of electoral dysfunction. I conclude with an annotated bibliography of sources cited.

## **II. Demographic Differences in Registration and Turnout**

### **A. 2010 Election Data**

The Census Bureau's most recent data on registration and turnout is from the 2010 midterm elections.<sup>4</sup> The Bureau organizes the data according to demographic, social, and geographic characteristics. Their survey found the following patterns:

- **Age:** Registration was lowest among 18-24 year olds (45.3%) and increased for each age group, with the highest rate among those 75 years and older (75.3%). Turnout

---

<sup>1</sup> R. MICHAEL ALVAREZ ET AL., MAKING VOTER REGISTRATION EASIER: EVALUATION OF THE "WELCOME KIT" VOTER REGISTRATION PROJECT 9 (2010), *available at* [http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/mvre\\_final\\_report\\_020810\\_pdf\\_4b71c9c334.pdf](http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/mvre_final_report_020810_pdf_4b71c9c334.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* at 10.

<sup>4</sup> CENSUS BUREAU, VOTING AND REGISTRATION (2012), <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/socdemo/voting/index.html>.

similarly increased with age, increasing from 21.3% for the youngest group to 59.2% for the oldest group.

- **Gender:** 63.5% of males registered to vote, and 44.8% reported that they voted. Among females, 66.6% registered and 46.2% voted.
- **Race:** Among non-Hispanic Whites, 68.2% registered and 48.6% voted. The respective numbers for Blacks were 62.8% and 43.5%; for Asian-Americans, 49.3% and 30.8%; and for Hispanics, 51.6% and 31.2%.
- **Educational Attainment:** Registration rates increased with further education, ranging from 45.0% for those with less than a high school diploma to 81.0% for those with an advanced degree. Turnout rates grew from 26.3% for those with less than a high school diploma to 67.1% for those with an advanced degree.
- Data can also be sorted by region, employment status, class of worker, disability status, income, duration of residence, marital status, and veteran status.

## **B. Voter Perceptions of the Registration Process**

A 2006 study found that 10% of survey respondents found the voter registration process in their state to be difficult.<sup>5</sup>

- Younger voters, those who were not registered to vote, and political independents were especially likely to believe the registration process was difficult.
- Men were slightly more likely than women to view registration as difficult.
- College graduates and those with a high school education or lower were more likely to view registration as difficult than those with some college education.
- Nearly 10% of whites believed the registration process was difficult, compared to 16% of blacks and almost 19% of those of other races.
- Among Republicans, 5.1% felt that registration was difficult, compared to 11.6% of Democrats and 13.5% of Independents.
- Only 2.5% of respondents living in states with election day registration viewed the process as difficult.

## **III. Factors Found to Affect Registration and Turnout Rates**

### **A. The “Pure” Effect of Registration on Turnout**

The relationship between registration and turnout is complex, as registration laws and practices vary considerably among counties and states. While more stringent registration regulations, such as residency requirements and voter roll purges, are commonly regarded as reducing registration and turnout rates, Burden & Neiheisel studied data from Wisconsin to isolate the “pure” effect of a registration requirement on turnout.<sup>6</sup> Since Wisconsin does not have registration deadlines or other restrictions common in other states, the adoption of a registration requirement imposed the minimal costs associated with such a program—prospective voters simply had to complete paperwork and mail the registration or submit it in

---

<sup>5</sup> R. Michael Alvarez & Morgan Llewellyn, *How Hard Can It Be: Do Citizens Think It Is Difficult to Register to Vote?*, 18 STAN. L. & POL’Y REV. 382, 395 (2007).

<sup>6</sup> Barry C. Burden & Jacob R. Neiheisel, *Election Administration and the Pure Effect of Voter Registration on Turnout*, 66 POL. RES. Q. 77 (2013), available at <http://prq.sagepub.com/content/66/1/77.full.pdf+html>.

person. By comparing turnout before and after Wisconsin instituted the registration requirement, the study found that requiring voters to register lowers turnout by approximately 2%. “Add-ons” to the registration process, such as closing dates, residency requirements, roll purging processes, and felon disenfranchisements laws have a greater combined effect on turnout than registration itself.<sup>7</sup>

Ansolahehere & Konisky conducted a similar study at the county level in Ohio and New York, and found that the imposition of a registration requirement “decreased participation over the long-term by 3 to 5 participation points.”<sup>8</sup>

## **B. Registration Closing Dates**

Virtually all the literature agrees that the most significant variable influencing registration rates is the deadline, or “closing date,” for registration forms to be submitted.

- Highton finds that election day registration boosts turnout by about 5%.<sup>9</sup>
- Early closing dates are likely to have their largest effects among the young, the residentially mobile, and those with either a high school degree or some college education.
- Brians & Groffman find that citizens living in states with election day registration (“EDR”) are more likely to vote, and that this effect is most pronounced (7% increase in turnout) among citizens of middle income and education.<sup>10</sup>
- Alvarez’s review of FEC data from the 2000 election found that 77.3% of the eligible population was registered to vote in non-EDR states, compared to 88.8% in EDR states. Turnout was 50.5% of the voting aged population turned out in non-EDR states, and 65.6% in states with EDR.<sup>11</sup>
- Rosenstone & Wolfinger’s study of the 1972 election found the closing date to be the most significant variable affecting turnout.<sup>12</sup> Closing registration 30 days before the election decreased turnout by 3-9%, and closing registration 50 days before the election decreased turnout by 17% for those with a 40 to 60% chance of going to the polls.
- Highton explains that “requiring registration before election day usually entails a separate trip to register that could require a longer journey, at a less convenient hour, to complete a more complicated procedure—and at a time when interest in the campaign is far from its peak.”<sup>13</sup> Alvarez adds that EDR increases turnout by interacting with the dynamics of political campaigns, which build in intensity in the weeks and days right before an

---

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* at 87.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Ansolahehere & David M. Konisky, *The Introduction of Voter Registration and Its Effect on Turnout*, 14 POL. ANALYSIS 83, 84 (2006), available at <http://pan.oxfordjournals.org/content/14/1/83.full.pdf+html>.

<sup>9</sup> Benjamin Highton, *Voter Registration and Turnout in the United States*, 2 PERSP. ON POL. 507, 509 (2004), available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3688813>.

<sup>10</sup> Craig Leonard Brians & Bernard Groffman, *When Registration Barriers Fall, Who Votes? An Empirical Test of a Rational Choice Model*, 99 PUB. CHOICE 161, 169 (1999), available at <http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~bgroffman/24%20Brians-Groffman-When%20registration%20barriers%20fall.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> R. Michael Alvarez et al., *How One-Step Voting Can Change the Composition of the American Electorate* 5 (Caltech-MIT Voting Tech. Project, Working Paper No. 5, 2002), available at [http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/vtp\\_wp5.pdf](http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/vtp_wp5.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> Steven J. Rosenstone & Raymond E. Wolfinger, *The Effect of Registration Laws on Voter Turnout*, 72 AM. POL. SCI. REV. 22, 31 (1978), available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1953597>.

<sup>13</sup> Highton, *supra* note 8, at 509.

election.<sup>14</sup>

- Related, the likelihood of voting is correlated with when the person registered. Those who register in the 52 weeks prior to the election are more likely to vote than those who register earlier, and this is particularly pronounced among those who register within one week of the registration deadline.<sup>15</sup> Late registrants are primarily young, geographically mobile, and politically independent. Late registering Republicans turn out at a significantly higher rate than comparable Democrats and independents.

### C. “Motor Voter” laws

In 1993 Congress passed the National Voter Registration Act, colloquially known as “motor voter” because of its requirement that individuals be given the opportunity to register to vote or to change their voter registration data when applying for or receiving services at designated government agencies, including Departments of Motor Vehicles.<sup>16</sup>

- At the national level, turnout in 1998, 2000, and 2002 was not substantially higher than pre-NVRA levels.<sup>17</sup>
- According to the 2000 Current Population Survey, 40% of those who registered did so at the DMV, 17% did so at a voter registration office, and 12% did so by mail.<sup>18</sup>
- Highton distinguishes “active” motor voter states, where registration is effectively integrated into the normal course of DMV transactions, from “passive” states where forms are available but no prompting is provided. Passive states have minimal effect on turnout, while active programs increase turnout by about 5%.<sup>19</sup>
- Brown & Wedeking conclude that “by encouraging lower income citizens to register, NVRA has helped create a pool of registered citizens less likely to vote.”<sup>20</sup> While there is nearly a 1:1 ratio between registration and turnout rates among wealthy citizens, the effect is much weaker for lower income levels. This argument conflicts with earlier studies that found that “even unlikely registrants are relatively frequent voters when they do register,”<sup>21</sup> and that “low-resource voters act more like high-resource voters once the registration threshold has been crossed.”<sup>22</sup>

### D. Online Registration

---

<sup>14</sup> Alvarez et al., *supra* note 11, at 5.

<sup>15</sup> James G. Gimpel et al., *Election Year Stimuli and the Timing of Voter Registration*, 13 PARTY POL. 351, 367 (2007), available at <http://ppq.sagepub.com/content/13/3/351.full.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 1973gg.

<sup>17</sup> Highton, *supra* note 9, at 511.

<sup>18</sup> Alvarez et al., *supra* note 11, at 2.

<sup>19</sup> Highton, *supra* note 9, at 510.

<sup>20</sup> Robert D. Brown & Justin Wedeking, *People Who Have Their Tickets But Do Not Use Them: “Motor Voter,” Registration, and Turnout Revisited*, 34 AM. POL. RES. 479, 483 (2006), available at <http://www.uky.edu/~jpwede2/APR%20Brown%20Wedeking.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> Highton, *supra* note 9, at 508.

<sup>22</sup> Gimpel et al., *supra* note 15, at 352.

A 2010 Pew study analyzed the online voter registration systems (“OLVR”) in Arizona and Washington.<sup>23</sup> Arizona had been using OLVR for six years, and the system was integrated with other online services available at the Motor Vehicle Division. Washington’s system was in its second year of availability, and was operated as a stand-alone service by the Secretary of State. Despite these differences in structure, functionality, and administrative implementation, several conclusions were generalizable across both states. Among the findings:

- Internet registrants tend to be much younger than those who register via traditional methods.
- Younger people who registered online voted at higher rates in 2008 than those who registered by other means, even though young people generally had the lowest turnout of any age group. In Arizona, 93% of people under 34 who registered online voted in the election.
- Whites are more likely to register online than racial and ethnic minorities.
- Residents of metropolitan areas are more likely to register online than residents of more rural areas.
- Online registration is very popular, but public awareness is low. Ninety-five percent of those who registered online would recommend the practice to other states, but in Arizona and Washington only 69% and 27% of registered voters, respectively, were aware of the opportunity.

#### **E. New Resident “Welcome Kits”**

A pilot test in the 2008 election involved mailing voter registration materials in a “Welcome Kit” to individuals in the Columbus, Cleveland, and Cincinnati areas who had recently filed a change of address form with the postal service.<sup>24</sup> This was intended to increase the convenience of registration by obviating the need for voters to seek out registration materials at a government office or elsewhere. The project found:

- The cost per registered voter for this program compares favorably with available data about registration costs from other studies,
- Individuals appear more likely, generally, to register to vote using the Welcome Kit (and using most other methods) during the height of an election campaign, when the voter is most focused on the potential benefits of voting and the need to register is high.
- The Welcome Kit program was most effective in registering more affluent movers.
- The Welcome Kit program tended to be most effective in registering individuals who had been registered prior to moving.
- Relative to other subpopulations of registered voters, Welcome Kit participants were more likely to vote by mail.
- The Welcome Kit program did not add to the burden of registering new voters in the local election offices in Ohio.

#### **F. Registration Office Hours**

---

<sup>23</sup> MATT A. BARRETO ET AL., ONLINE VOTER REGISTRATION (OVLR) SYSTEMS IN ARIZONA AND WASHINGTON: EVALUATING USAGE, PUBLIC CONFIDENCE, AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES (Apr. 2010), *available at* [http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS\\_Assets/2010/online\\_voter\\_reg.pdf](http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS_Assets/2010/online_voter_reg.pdf).

<sup>24</sup> ALVAREZ ET AL., *supra* note 1, at 106-07.

- Highton cites studies that suggest requiring registration offices to be open regularly for at least 40 hours a week or on evenings and weekends has minimal, if any, influence on turnout.<sup>25</sup>
- Rosenstone & Wolfinger's study of the 1972 election, however, found that limited registration office hours, along with early deadlines for registration, was one of the biggest impediments to turnout.<sup>26</sup>
- They found that reducing registration office hours below 40 hours a week lowered turnout by 2 to 4%; closing offices on Saturdays and weekends reduced turnout by 2 to 6%; and failing to provide any kind of absentee registration reduced turnout by 2 to 4%.

#### **IV. Factors Found to Have Minimal Effect on Registration and Turnout Rates**

The following factors have been found to affect registration and turnout only minimally, if at all:

- Option to register by mail
- Requirement that voters reregister at periodic intervals
- Purging nonvoters from registration lists after a specified amount of time<sup>27</sup>
- Residency requirements
- Presence of deputy registrars
- Location of the registrar's office
- Number of years before nonvoters are purged from registration rolls<sup>28</sup>

#### **V. Relationship Between Registration and Other Election Problems**

Just as the relative conveniences and burdens of registration have important implications for voter turnout, the registration system has consequences for the election system more broadly. Problems in other areas of the election process can negatively affect registration, and problems with registration can compound problems elsewhere.

##### **A. Administrative Capacity**

Burden & Neiheisel contend that administrative capacity is a key determinant of registration and subsequent turnout. Polling places without adequate supplies, well-maintained facilities, and properly trained and compensated election workers “magnify the [negative] impact of registration, depressing turnout more than it otherwise would have been.”<sup>29</sup> Resource disparities result in some voters facing the additional burdens of long lines at polling places, while better funded municipalities can absorb much of the negative impact of registration.

##### **B. Provisional Voting**

---

<sup>25</sup> Highton, *supra* note 9, at 510.

<sup>26</sup> Rosenstone & Wolfinger, *supra* note 12, at 31.

<sup>27</sup> Highton, *supra* note 9, at 510 (citing studies from 1967, 1978, and the 1990s).

<sup>28</sup> Rosenstone & Wolfinger, *supra* note 12, at 24.

<sup>29</sup> Burden & Neiheisel, *supra* note 6, at 87.

Voters whose registration is questioned on election day may cast a provisional ballot. If registration lists are not accurate, problems with the provisional voting system risk disenfranchising and otherwise harming polling place operations.

- In 2008, nearly half of all provisional ballots for which data was available were rejected due to voters not appearing on the rolls.<sup>30</sup>
- Allowing only individuals who are in the correct polling location to cast a provisional ballot risks making polling operations more complicated and confrontational.<sup>31</sup>
- These problems could be ameliorated by better training of polling place workers to deal with provisional ballot requests and better ways to process provisional voters (e.g. ensuring there are enough pens and pencils to make sure provisional voters do not have to wait in line simply to fill out their form).

### **C. Authenticity and Secrecy**

Voter registration requirements also implicate voter fraud and privacy concerns. Statewide lists are interactive with other databases (such as Department of Motor Vehicle and Social Security Administration databases), and pass from state to local election offices. Alvarez warns that hackers who exploit vulnerabilities at any point in the transmission path could take advantage of the information in ways that have negative consequences both for the election (e.g. by adding or deleting registrations) and other purposes (e.g. identity theft or stalking).<sup>32</sup>

### **D. Accuracy, Cost, and Efficiency**

Finally, problems with the accuracy, cost, and efficiency of voter registration systems can have systemic, interrelated consequences for the entire election system.

- A 2012 Pew study noted that the failure of the paper-based registration process to stay up to date as voters move or die can increase the perception that the process lacks integrity or could be susceptible to fraud.<sup>33</sup>
- “Costs for printing and processing forms, handling returned mail from inaccurate records, maintaining registration databases, and other expenses add millions of dollars to state and local budgets at a time when government offices are struggling to deliver the highest value for the taxpayer dollar.”<sup>34</sup>
- “The system’s inefficiencies render millions of eligible citizens—even those who have tried to register—unable to vote and create bottlenecks at the polls on Election Day.”<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> PEW CTR. ON THE STATES, BRINGING ELECTIONS INTO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: VOTER REGISTRATION MODERNIZATION 2 (2009), available at [http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS\\_Assets/2009/Voter\\_Registration\\_Modernization\\_Brief\\_web.pdf](http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS_Assets/2009/Voter_Registration_Modernization_Brief_web.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> *Voter Registration: Past, Present and Future: Hearing Before the Comm’n on Federal Election Reform*, at 4 (2005) (written testimony of R. Michael Alvarez, Co-Director, Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project), available at <http://www.american.edu/spa/cdem/upload/2-alvarez.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> R. Michael Alvarez, *Potential Threats to Statewide Voter Registration Systems* 3 (Caltech/MIT Voting Tech. Project, Working Paper No. 40, 2005), available at [http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/vtp\\_wp40.pdf](http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/vtp_wp40.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> PEW CTR. ON THE STATES, INACCURATE, COSTLY, AND INEFFICIENT 3 (2012), available at [http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Election\\_reform/Pew\\_Upgrading\\_Voter\\_Registration.pdf](http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Election_reform/Pew_Upgrading_Voter_Registration.pdf).

<sup>34</sup> *Id.* at 5.

<sup>35</sup> PEW CTR. ON THE STATES, *supra* note 30, at 2.

- Improving registration would allow election administrators to spend less time on NVRA lawsuits, since virtually all eligible voters would be included on the rolls or able to correct their registration.

## VI. Recommendations

Of all potential registration reforms, election day registration is the practice most proven to increase voter participation.<sup>36</sup> Per the discussion above, online registration and new resident welcome kits are effective practices, but the benefit of these reforms mostly accrues to middle and upper class citizens. To move the United States closer to 100 percent voter registration, the Center for Voting and Democracy issued the following recommendations<sup>37</sup>:

- Use existing government databases to automatically register all citizens to vote.
- Create a failsafe policy to ensure voters left off the rolls can register and vote on Election Day.
- Set a uniform voter registration age of 16-years-old to systematically register youth. Tie this policy with a national "voting curriculum" in every high school.
- Require U.S. citizens to register to vote when completing taxes or actively opt-out of the process.
- Tie Post Office Change of Address forms to the voter registration database.<sup>38</sup>
- Require state or local governments to send every residence a notice of those registered at that location. Residents may then make changes as needed and return the updated form.
- Provide every U.S. citizen, upon birth or after naturalization, a voter registration number similar to a social security number to be used in all elections and activated when a voter turns 18.

Similar to the suggestion of automatic registration, where voters are added to the rolls when they interface with various government programs and agencies, a policy of "active registration," where the government takes the initiative to locate and register eligible voters, could substantially increase the participation rate.<sup>39</sup> Michael Alvarez and Thad Hall suggest an active registration policy would increase ease and accuracy, while potentially decreasing costs by, for example, obviating the significant increase in capacity needed to process the large influx of registrations submitted near the registration deadline, and by reducing the costs associated with processing provisional ballots, which are inevitably incurred given the higher error rate of voter-initiated registration.<sup>40</sup> Scholars note more research is needed to ascertain the empirical effect of many registration practices and potential reforms.<sup>41</sup>

## VII. Annotated Bibliography

---

<sup>36</sup> Daniel P. Tokaji, *Voter Registration and Election Reform*, 17 WM. & MARY BILL RTS. J. 453, 499 (2008).

<sup>37</sup> *7 Ways to Universal Voter Registration*, The CTR. FOR VOTING & DEMOCRACY, available at <http://www.fairvote.org/7-ways-to-universal-voter-registration#.Ubu3-vlfGyJ>.

<sup>38</sup> See also Tokaji, *supra* note 36, at 498 (advocating "registration portability," the practice in nine states and Washington, D.C. of allowing voters to stay registered when they move across county or municipal lines within a state). Tokaji further recommends federalizing registration, to allow for easy portability across state lines. *Id.* at 501.

<sup>39</sup> *Id.* at 502.

<sup>40</sup> R. Michael Alvarez & Thad E. Hall., *Resolving Voter Registration Problems: Making Registration Easier, Less Costly and More Accurate* (Caltech-MIT Voting Tech. Project, Working Paper No. 97, 2009), available at [http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/wp\\_87\\_pdf\\_4acfa68b61.pdf](http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/wp_87_pdf_4acfa68b61.pdf).

<sup>41</sup> See, e.g., Tokaji, *supra* note 36, at 497.



**1. R. Michael Alvarez, *Potential Threats to Statewide Voter Registration Systems* (Caltech-MIT Voting Tech. Project, Working Paper No. 40, 2005), available at [http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/vtp\\_wp40.pdf](http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/vtp_wp40.pdf).**

Alvarez arranges the threats to statewide voter registration systems into four categories—authenticity of the registration file, secrecy of the registration file, integrity of the registration file, and potential voter registration system failure—and analyzes the implications of each threat.

**2. R. Michael Alvarez et al., *How One-Step Voting Can Change the Composition of the American Electorate* (Caltech-MIT Voting Tech. Project, Working Paper No. 5, 2002), available at [http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/vtp\\_wp5.pdf](http://www.vote.caltech.edu/sites/default/files/vtp_wp5.pdf).**

Alvarez summarizes registration and turnout data from the 2000 election, paying particular attention to the effect of election day registration.

**3. R. MICHAEL ALVAREZ ET AL., MAKING VOTER REGISTRATION EASIER: EVALUATION OF THE “WELCOME KIT” VOTER REGISTRATION PROJECT (2010), available at <http://www.vote.caltech.edu/content/making-voter-registration-easier-evaluation-welcome-kit-voter-registration-pilot-project>.**

The authors problems with registration processes generally, and then discuss the pilot test of mailing voter registration materials to potential voters who recently moved in the Columbus, Cleveland, and Cincinnati areas.

**4. *Voter Registration: Past, Present and Future: Hearing Before the Comm’n on Federal Election Reform*, at 4 (2005) (written testimony of R. Michael Alvarez, Co-Director, Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project), available at <http://www.american.edu/spa/cdem/upload/2-alvarez.pdf>.**

Alvarez outlines various proposals to improve the registration process, from making registration databases more secure and improving provisional balloting to establishing a more definitive interpretation of HAVA requirements regarding computerized statewide voter registration files.

**5. R. Michael Alvarez & Morgan Llewellyn, *How Hard Can It Be: Do Citizens Think It Is Difficult to Register to Vote?*, 18 STAN. L. & POL’Y REV. 382 (2007)**

Alvarez & Llewellyn summarize perceptions of the difficulty of voter registration, broken down by demographic.

**6. Stephen Ansolabehere & David M. Konisky, *The Introduction of Voter Registration and Its Effect on Turnout*, 14 POL. ANALYSIS 83 (2006), available at <http://pan.oxfordjournals.org/content/14/1/83.full.pdf+html>.**

Ansolabere & Konisky study the introduction of registration requirements in Ohio and New York counties, and conclude that registration decreased participation over the long term by 3 to 5 percentage points.

**7. MATT A. BARRETO ET AL., ONLINE VOTER REGISTRATION (OVL) SYSTEMS IN ARIZONA AND WASHINGTON: EVALUATING USAGE, PUBLIC CONFIDENCE, AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES (Apr. 2010), available at [http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS\\_Assets/2010/online\\_voter\\_reg.pdf](http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS_Assets/2010/online_voter_reg.pdf).**

The authors analyze the use and perception of online voter registration systems in Arizona and Washington, focusing on differences among demographic groups.

**8. Craig Leonard Brians & Bernard Grofman, *When Registration Barriers Fall, Who Votes? An Empirical Test of a Rational Choice Model*, 99 PUB. CHOICE 161 (1999), available at <http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~bgrofman/24%20Brians-Grofman-When%20registration%20barriers%20fall.pdf>.**

Brians & Grofman find that election day registration increases turnout among citizens with medium education and medium income more than among citizens at the higher and lower ends of the income and education scales.

**9. Robert D. Brown & Justin Wedeking, *People Who Have Their Tickets But Do Not Use Them: "Motor Voter," Registration, and Turnout Revisited*, 34 AM. POL. RES. 479 (2006), available at <http://www.uky.edu/~jpwede2/APR%20Brown%20Wedeking.pdf>.**

Brown & Wedeking conclude that the NVRA added more lower-income citizens to the registration rolls, but the fact of their registration does not make them more likely to vote.

**10. Barry C. Burden & Jacob R. Neiheisel, *Election Administration and the Pure Effect of Voter Registration on Turnout*, 66 POL. RES. Q. 77 (2013), available at <http://prq.sagepub.com/content/66/1/77.full.pdf+html>.**

By studying the imposition of registration requirements in Wisconsin, Burden & Neiheisel find that registration reduces turnout by about 2 percentage points. However, the administrative capacities of local election figures can significantly influence how much registration affects turnout.

**11. CENSUS BUREAU, VOTING AND REGISTRATION (2012), <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/socdemo/voting/index.html>.**

Surveys after the 2010 midterm elections sort registration and turnout rates by demographic and other indicators.

**12. James G. Gimpel et al., *Election Year Stimuli and the Timing of Voter Registration*, 13 PARTY POL. 351 (2007), available at <http://ppq.sagepub.com/content/13/3/351.full.pdf>.**

The authors contend that citizens who register within 52 prior to the election or more likely to vote than citizens who register at other times. This is particularly pronounced among those who register the week of the registration deadline.

**13. Benjamin Highton, *Voter Registration and Turnout in the United States*, 2 PERSP. ON POL. 507 (2004), available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3688813>.**

Highton summarizes academic literature on voter registration and turnout, and identifies four registration laws that have a significant impact on turnout: poll taxes, literacy tests, registration closing dates, and "motor voter" laws.

**14. PEW CTR. ON THE STATES, BRINGING ELECTIONS INTO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: VOTER REGISTRATION MODERNIZATION (2009), available at [http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS\\_Assets/2009/Voter\\_Registration\\_Modernization\\_Brief\\_web.pdf](http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS_Assets/2009/Voter_Registration_Modernization_Brief_web.pdf).**

This Pew study identifies various inefficiencies related to voter registration and makes recommendations for reform, such as making voter registration more portable for voters who move and utilizing multiple official data sources to put eligible voters on the rolls and ensure the accuracy of lists.

**15. PEW CTR. ON THE STATES, INACCURATE, COSTLY, AND INEFFICIENT (2012), available at [http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Election\\_reform/Pew\\_Upgrading\\_Voter\\_Registration.pdf](http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Election_reform/Pew_Upgrading_Voter_Registration.pdf).**

This study catalogues problems of accuracy, cost, and efficiency related to voter registration, noting, for example, that 24 million voter registrations in the U.S. are invalid or significantly inaccurate, and the costs of maintaining voter lists in the U.S. are much higher than in Canada.

**16. Steven J. Rosenstone & Raymond E. Wolfinger, *The Effect of Registration Laws on Voter Turnout*, 72 AM. POL. SCI. REV. 22 (1978), available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1953597>.**

Rosenstone & Wolfinger explain that registration laws reduced turnout by 9% in the 1972 presidential election, with the early deadlines for registration and limited registration office hours having the biggest effect on turnout.

**17. Daniel P. Tokaji, *Voter Registration and Election Reform*, 17 WM. & MARY BILL RTS. J. 453, 499 (2008).**

Professor Tokaji examines legislation and litigation surrounding the voter registration process, and makes recommendation for reform, including: registration portability, automatic voter registration, election day registration, registration federalization, universal voter registration, and compulsory registration and voting.